

FLASHBACK

Preserving the Past for the Future

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Cover photo: Medal of Honor winner Clarence Craft. Photo by Charles Bickford, *The Morning News*.



Clarence B. Craft

Medal of Honor Winner

Your editor, who served in World War II as an 8th Air Force B-24 bomber pilot, was suddenly confronted in 1994 with the 50th anniversary of D-Day. 1995 marks the 50th anniversary of Germany's surrender, and the end of Japan's aggressive war, brought about by the dropping of the atomic bomb. With the death of several of his crew members, plus a reunion with some of his remaining comrades of the 467th Bomb Group, Keith Newhouse was forced to realize that the momentous events of the mid-20th century were already "The Past" that Washington County Historical Society claims in its motto it is trying to preserve. When modern man reaches his 70's he is a very vulnerable candidate for the last journey we all must take. Up to now, in past wars, the actual combat has been done primarily by boys in their teen and 20's. Washington County has many veterans with amazing histories to relate about their service in WWII. So your Society is going to publish some of these stories in the next several issues. We're proud to begin our series with a medal of honor winner—Clarence B. Craft.

A Few Biographical Notes

Clarence was born 23 September 1921 in San Bernardino, CA. His father was an engineer for the

South Pacific & Santa Fe R. R. who died a horrible death when the steam engine he was driving blew up in a tunnel. Steam burns caused by the accident killed him in 1929 or 1930. Little Clarence's mother continued to work as a cook for the Harvey House Restaurant chain owned by the same railroad. She was born Pearl Collins on a large plantation her family owned near Roanoke, VA. She often told her children about being nursed and loved by a black nanny when she was young. After Mr. Craft's death, Mrs. Craft moved her family around quite a bit because of her job.

After his service in Okinawa, Craft was brought back to Fort Ord, CA as training instructor for combat troops. He was out of the army in 1946, but re-enlisted in 1947. He spent a short time with the occupation forces in Japan; then went on with the 2nd Infantry Division to Korea where he served from 1950-1953.

Stateside, he was mustered out at Barstow, CA.

Three times he attained his top rating as a Master Sergeant, was busted from that rank three times, finally coming out of Korea as a corporal, and gained an honorable discharge.

His first wife was a full-blooded Indian who died of alcoholism. They had one son, Raymond, who served in VietNam and died from exposure to Agent Orange.

He met his second wife Tammy here in Arkansas



Clarence Craft at a 1994 Veterans' Day service in Fayetteville.

about 32 years ago. A G.I. had married her in her native Japan, but he abandoned her after bringing her to the states. She soon became Mrs. Craft. He adopted her four boys, although they kept their father's name, McCleand. Craft proudly relates they all served their "obligations" in the VietNam action. George is now an air controller at a field in Texas. David is currently stationed in Germany. Rick became a tech sergeant, flying helicopters in 'nam, and is now an army accountant at Camp Campbell, KY. Allen came back to Rogers, AR after his service, and is presently a roofer, married with two children.

Mr. and Mrs. Craft have a daughter Sally Ann, born 8-12-68, 26 years old. Clarence declares she is a real tomboy who loves the adventurous life found in camping, mountain climbing, sailing, parachute jumps, and bungee take-offs. She is working in a hospital in Seattle as a surgeon's assistant, studying to be a surgeon.

Craft came to Arkansas 32 years ago to be near his mother, sister and brother who live in Rogers. Clarence worked in construction as a mason-tender, registered with Local 107 in Fort Smith. For 20 years he was employed around the University of Arkansas until he retired. He has a home here in Fayetteville and spends innumerable hours as a volunteer orderly at the Veterans Hospital.

Background Notes on the Battle of Okinawa

This was the last major campaign of World War II and the largest land-sea-air engagement in history. It lasted an appalling three months, during which the Japanese were defeated, but refused to surrender. There were 23,000 American dead, 91,000 Japanese, and 150,000 Okinawan civilians—more than the losses of Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined. These are the statistics, cold

and non-descriptive of what really took place on a pleasant, agrarian island with a long history of its inhabitants being happy, hospitable hosts to invaders, including their Japanese conquerors.

The Japanese sacrificed the island and Okinawans as the last defense before the homeland's invasion. Okinawa's terrain was hilly, had many natural caves, and cemeteries carved out of hillocks. These offered tactical advantages the Japanese leaders exploited to make every inch of the ground in front subject to cross-fire by rifle, machine gun, artillery, hand grenades, and/or mortar fire. This defense plan was absolutely devastating to American assault troops, even though U.S. battleships, bombers and artillery put down a barrage unbelievable in intensity before each attempted advance.

Clarence Craft came from Leyte with the 96th Infantry Division to invade Okinawa on April 1, 1945. American intelligence was so badly misinformed about reality on Okinawa that the troops were led to believe that the campaign would be a matter of days or weeks because of our superiority in fire-power and numbers of men. The troops were to have a fairly easy time overrunning the island.

Japanese masterful strategy soon manifested itself. As soon as our saturation shelling was lifted so the Americans could attempt to take a hill or ridge, the enemy came out of fox- and spider-holes with his machine guns and rifles, wheeled heavy guns out of caves, used deadly accurate knee-mortar fire, and tossed grenades—soon decimating any group sent against them.

By May, Okinawa's heavy rain season added to the woes of the combatants. The Spring of 1945 was much wetter than usual, delivering heavy, ceaseless rain, day after day, some days as much as ten inches, so dense men

couldn't make out their friends in neighboring foxholes.

Foxholes could be created in only two ways. Much of the terrain was composed of rock and coral. When a bomb or shell blew a crater in this stuff, there was a ready-made shelter—no other way to dig a hole in it. In areas where it was possible to dig a hole and crawl into it, the digger was in water up to his waist within an hour. Both holes were like sitting in a bathtub with temperatures in the 40's. Wet for days on end, "jungle rot" spread from feet to crotch. Typhoid broke out. "immersion foot" was a new name for the "trench foot" of World War I. And it was just as nasty and torturous. Dry feet became a longed-for luxury. The mud's "misery beyond description" intensified the infantry men's trial with garbage, dysentery, rotting corpses, puke, pus and maggots, so men lived, literally, day and night in open cesspools. Add to these scenes, almost wholly hostile to man, the din of ceaseless artillery thunder, the shriek of rockets, and cries of the wounded, and you complete the picture. No wonder it drove men mad, into conditions labeled "shell shock" or "combat fatigue" from which many men never completely recovered. Circumstances such as the above led to thousands of irrational acts of cowardice and bravery.

Hen Hill had held up our troops for 12 days. Battalion after battalion had been beaten back, suffering shocking casualties. PFC Craft had been selected as the point man to lead a team of five in a probing maneuver to judge the enemy's resistance. Just a short distance up the hill, three of the six were severely wounded, and the others pinned down. With a feeling of utter frustration, and the certainty he was going to die anyway, Craft stood up in full view of his enemy and began firing his BAR at any movement. He pulled up the slope, killing Japanese with accurate, rapid fire. Throwing grenades into

trenches and nests of destruction, he gained the crest of his objective, where he stood silhouetted, again a perfect target. By then, members of his platoon were complying with his motions to advance. They passed him more ammunition and grenades to hurl down the reverse slope into the main enemy trench. Confusion and panic grabbed the defenders. He continued down the far side of Hen Hill, pumping rifle fire into Japanese at point-blank range. In this pursuit, he came on a heavy machine gun nest that had been particularly harassing against our troops. In his wrath, he obliterated this gang, still using rifle and grenades. In all, he thinks he did away with 38 Japs. His final foray had to do with a cave where many enemies were cowering. He was handed a satchel charge which he tossed into the cave. It failed to explode, so Craft retrieved the bomb and, further ignoring his vulnerability, relit the fuse, threw it back—sealing those Japanese in their chosen tomb.

Craft's extraordinary feat of advancing where battalion strength had failed, crumbled the defense, allowing one more hill to be captured. It proved to be the key to the collapse of that entire defense line.

The action on Okinawa had been so brutal that more Medals of Honor were earned there than in any other single engagement in World War II. Twenty-three brave men's acts were acknowledged. President Harry S. Truman presented Cpl. Craft with his in a ceremony on the White House lawn. Fourteen other honorees accompanied him.

(Note: For a definitive history of Okinawa, see *TEN-NOZAN: The Battle of Okinawa and The Atomic Bomb* by George Feifer, published by Ticknor & Fields.)



QUERIES

Karen Culp Ashorn, 570 Huckleberry Lane, Bellville, TX 77418. I would like to find information on siblings or ancestors of the following persons: Margaret "Meg" Ellen, **PARKER KENNAN** b. 27 Oct 1860 in Tennessee and married Walter Alexander **KENNAN** on 9 May 1877; Mildred **SHUMATE KENNAN**, born Mildred **FULKERSON**, b. 13 Nov 1831 in Tennessee and married John **KENNAN**, Jr. on 26 Oct 1848; Mary Arlina "Dink" **SHOFNER** on 14 Dec 1881; Jacob **DENTON**, b 4 Dec 1804 in Jefferson Co., TN and married Lydia **BARRINGTON DENTON** on 17 Aug 1830; James William **EDWARDS**, b. 5 Feb 1858 in North Carolina and married Martha Emmaline **BROWN EDWARDS** on ?-their first child was my grandmother, Hazel Blanche **EDWARDS KENNAN**, b. 15 Aug 1900; Alexander A. Brown, b. 7 Apr 1827 in Polk Co., TN and married Nancy A. **HARRIS BROWN** on 4 Sep 1851-Nancy **HARRIS BROWN**, b. 3 Jan 1829 is probably a daughter of William A. M. **HARRIS**, who came with his wife Basheba(sp?) to Washington Co., AR about 1854.

Michael B. Dougan, Professor of History, Arkansas State University, P.O. Drawer 1690, State University AR 72467-1690. I am preparing a biography of William M. Quesenbury, a nineteenth century Arkansas editor, poet, and painter. Quesenbury had close ties with the Cherokees and other tribes in the Indian Territory, served in both the Mexican and Civil Wars, and lived in Navasota, Texas, for a time after the Civil war. His final years were spent in Neosho, Missouri.

I need to locate every letter he sent or received and am especially interested in locating his drawings or paintings. I have been told (twenty years ago) that some of his paintings ended up in Pennsylvania. The publication of Quesenbury's western sketches will be a very valuable contribution to our understanding of the region. The man himself was an important figure in the Old Southwest, universally beloved.

Fay Robinson, P.O. Box 11, Brashear, TX. 75420 My Grandmother's name was Temperance **SELLERS** born October 30, 1874 in Coryell Co. TX. She married John Ralph **HAGAN** September 8, 1888 in Gatesville, TX. Her mother's name was Elizabeth Walker **BABB**, born in 1842 in Hot Springs AR, according to the 1850 census. She later gives her birthplace as Stoddard, MO. She married James **GREEN** who was living near. I have no record of the marriage. The family is found in Coryell Co. in the 1860 census. She marries Christopher C. **SELLERS** ("Kit") on May 1, 1860 in Gateville, TX. Her mother's name was Elizabeth **BRADLEY**, b. 1810. One census gives Illinois, another Tennessee. She married William **BABB** in 1827 in Cape Girardeau, MO. Their children were: 1. George W. b. August 21, 1831 in Cape Girardeau. 2. Mary Ann **TEMPERANCE** b. October 14, 1839 in Cape Girardeau. She also died and was buried in Missouri in January 14, 1841. 3. William or Cherokee Bill, as he was called. He was born November 7. 1835, in Cape Girardeau. 4. James M. born 1838 in Hot Springs, AR. 5. Daniel Shipman, b. 1840 in Hot Springs, AR. 6. Elizabeth **WALKER**, born 1842 (there are discrepancies in different census') in Hot Springs, AR, according to the 1850 census. 7. Davis S. born 1846 in Hot Springs. 8. Margaret Jane also born in 1846. Hot Springs. 9. Nancy **TEMPERANCE** born 1848, Hot Springs Co. AR. 10.

Sarah Ann, born 1851, Hot Springs Co. AR. There was possibly another son that I have no record on.

According to a letter I have, written by William **BABB**, or "Cherokee Bill" as he was known, his mother's name was Elizabeth **BRADLEY**, (or **BRYDLY**, **BRIDLY**, the way he spelled it) her mother's name was Merry (could be Mary) **OXFORD**, a full blood Cherokee Indian. He also says that Boot-a-knot (Boudinot?) was his grandma's folks. He mentions kin folk, or "connections" by the name of Alberty or Albanty, Colberts, Peachlin and Cornet. He says he remembers his mother's brother coming over, and an old indian they called "Old White Head John Oxford."

These letters were written in pencil and very hard to decipher. He claimed to be 77-78 when they were written. With all due respect, he spelled phonetically, the way words sounded to him.

I would like to correspond with anyone who could connect me to the **OXFORD** family or has information as to whether they were Indian and to what degree.

Bruce Bawer, *Readers Digest*

The higher you climb in your family tree, the more you'll realize that the tree's not really a tree. For as its branches divide again and again, more and more of them reconnect with one another, as well as with the branches of the family trees of everyone else on earth.

The further you look into your own genealogy, then, the more you're struck by the fact that we're all related to Dante and Mozart, to Churchill and Hitler—and to one another. To me, that's the ultimate lesson of genealogy: a lesson not in snobbery and self-importance, but in the fact that we're all members of one large family.

"A Boyhood Trip to Arkansas"

By R. K. Grover

Around Christmas, 1953, my mother bought a 1953 Chevy pick-up for my dad. The 1954 models had already come out, so they got a pretty good deal-about \$1500. My dad built a camper shell for it. The top was sheet metal-like a trough used to mix concrete. The solid wood front had a window and magazine/map rack, and there were two rear corner posts. It had canvas roll-up sides and back. On the passenger side in front of the rear fender was a tall water tank so we could carry our water with us.

In the summer of 1955, when I was about 10 years old, our family set out for a trip from California to Arkansas. Following old Route 66, we crossed the deserts at night and stayed in campgrounds along the way. My dad, mom, and grandma Pyeatt rode in the truck cab, and my three brothers and I rode in the truck bed. We pulled an old WWII jeep trailer filled with camping gear, luggage, food, etc. We stayed in places like Flagstaff (which I thought was somehow related to "Falstaff" beer), Albuquerque, Amarillo, and Tulsa.

When we got to Arkansas, our first stop was in Cane Hill where we stayed with Jim and Clem Pyeatt. While there, Uncle Jim showed us around and told us old family legends. As we went around seeing things like mill ponds and spring houses, Uncle Jim would occasionally reach down, pick up an arrowhead, and give it to one of us kids. I found out years later that he had "planted" the arrowheads for us to find. On the wall in his house was a large display of arrowheads and other Indian relics (I understand that this display is now in a museum at my grandfather's alma mater, U of A, in Fayetteville). Also

in his house was a room with a spring in it where they kept their perishable food.

The highlight of our trip was a visit to the house in Cane Hill where my grandfather, Samuel Thomas Pyeatt, was born (Tom and Jim were brothers). It was a two-story house with fireplaces in all the rooms - the only heat available. There was a large slate boulder out front where the kids used to do their schoolwork. Uncle Jim told us that during the Civil War a wounded Yankee soldier had been taken to this house to be nursed back to health. During this time the Yankees came through, burning and looting, but the house was spared because the women wouldn't give up the wounded soldier inside, and the Yankees wouldn't hurt one of their own.

One of our worst nights was spent driving through the Ozarks during a thunderstorm. Lightning was striking the road ahead of us and fireballs would roll down the road. Our "camper" wasn't exactly waterproof so the four of us in the back were getting soaked. We were all terrified, so to get my dad's attention, we kept shining our flashlights through the window, off the rear-view mirror, and into his eyes, not realizing that it was making it much harder for him to see where he was going. My dad finally found a gas station that was closed for the night. We pulled in under the awning to get out of the rain. My mother got out to come around to check on us in back, forgot about the trailer behind the truck, and about broke her shins when she ran into the trailer tongue. We probably all cried ourselves to sleep that night. The next morning the rain stopped, we gassed up, and asked to use the bathroom. Even with all the rain, there was a shortage of water in the area, so they made a point of having all of us use the toilet before it was flushed. Whew!

On the road again, we headed south for Okolona,

AR, home of Will May and one of my grandfather's sisters, Nell. Uncle Will's place was one story, set high on the foundation because of flooding, with a breezeway down the middle of the house to aid in cooling. They drank rain water collected from the roof and funneled to a cistern by the back porch. Aunt Nell told us of a superstition that you couldn't drink water from the cistern during any month that had an "r" in it. This being summer, we were O.K. Cooking was done on a wood stove, and baths were taken in a wash tub set up in the front bedroom. Hot baths required both the wood stove and the wash tub. The "bathroom" was an "out-house" across the back yard near the pig pen. One day while crawling around under the house, one of my brothers found an old double-barreled shotgun - all rusted with the wood stock rotted off. We brought it back to California to "fix up" some day - I don't know what ever happened to it. In the evenings we would sit on the verandah, leaning back with our chairs on two legs and our feet on the rungs telling stories and watching the fireflies.

One day we drove Uncle Will into town in the truck to pick up a block of ice for their ice-box. Normally he had ice delivered because too much of it would melt if he tried to bring it back in his buckboard (his only transportation). Anyway, that day Uncle Will sat up tall in the truck, nodding to all of his friends, showing off his "rich kin from California." In town, we stopped off at the general store and my oldest brother bought himself a flashy "sports car" hat. Uncle Will told us later that "By the end of the week, every [Negro] in town was wearing one of them hats." We each got a 5-cent Coke, picked up the ice, and headed back to the house.

Another day Uncle Will took us "fishin'" (all I caught were the bushes and trees along the stream). He

took us in his buckboard because he said my dad's truck wouldn't make it. We got there fine-the truck wouldn't have had any problems-but when it was time to go back home, Uncle Will drove the wagon into the stream, the current swung it around the horse, then he drove it out headed in the other direction. We then rode back to the house. I don't think Uncle Will ever realized that the truck had a "reverse" gear and could have turned around almost anywhere without having to go into the stream.

Every afternoon we saw a negro drive past the house in a wagon and disappear into the woods down by the creek. We were never allowed to go down that way. Later I heard that the man was working a still. Maybe that's what they drank during the months with an "r" in them.

On our way back to California we took a more southerly route, stopping at places like Carlsbad Caverns, White Sands and Tombstone (near Fort Huachuca, where Grampa and Gramma Pyeatt were homesteading when my mother was born). I can remember it being so hot that we would soak our bandannas in water from our canteens and hold them up in the breeze as we drove along to get them cool, then "mop our brows."

So, that's how I spent my summer vacation in 1955, as I remember it forty years later-learning family history and traditions firsthand in Arkansas.



The Willhites

Washington County Arkansas and Early 1830's in Strickler, Ark.

By Laverne Willhite Hicks

This past summer has really put Washington Co. on the map for me, as we found that our ancestors were some of its first settlers. They moved to Washington Co. in the early 1830's and made their home in Strickler, Ark.

My great great grandparents were Hiram and Mary Willhite, who had four children: Thomas, Martha, John, and Mary. John Willhite was my great grandfather.

In researching my family, we learned that Hiram and Thomas supported the Union during the Civil War and were not very popular for doing so. They were both captured, gutted and hanged during the war.

Enclosed are some information and articles sent with hopes that someone in your area will know more about these Willhite men.

The large article about Lieutenant Thomas Willhite is from the *Sketches of Union Men of the South-West* with adventures in *Rebellion on the Border*, purchased at Prairie Grove Battlefield Park. This book was written by Lt. Col. Albert W. Bishop, one of Thomas Willhite's commanders.

The only thing passed down through our family was that some years after the Civil War, our great grandfather, John Willhite, was hit on the head with a rock that killed him in the hills near his home. After this, John's children all moved into Oklahoma and other parts of Arkansas. No one talked about having had family in Washington Co.

My father is eighty-one years of age and has never

been told his grandfather's name. I'm trying to find that name.

I've found Thomas Willhite married Jane Brooks in 1855, but can't pick up on her during or after the Civil War. Martha married Lafayette A. Sharp in 1858 and had two children, but then we lose track of her. Mary married Lafayette Maston Rieff in 1871 and had several children. John Willhite married a lady we know only as Hannah E.

If there is anyone in your area that might know the maiden names of either of my two grandmothers, I would love to know them. I would be thrilled to know where in Tennessee they came from and any other information anyone has, good or bad. A picture of any of them would be most appreciated.

Laverne Willhite Hicks
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Willhite Lineage

Hiram Willhite	1810
John Willhite	1848
James Benjamin Willhite	1866-1921
Harrison Willhite	1913
Laverne (Willhite) Hicks	1939

Thomas Willhite

The Southwest has given birth to no more daring spirit than the subject of this sketch. Born in Washington Co. Ark. on the 23rd of September, 1836, and reared upon the Border, early manhood found him a true representative of frontier life. Hiram Willhite, his father, was one of the earliest settlers in Washington County, emigrating from Tennessee first to Frog Bayou,

in its southeastern corner, and thence, eighteen years since, to Fall Creek, twenty-one miles south of Fayetteville. There the impressions that make the "child the father of the man" were imprinted on the character of young Willhite, he grew up as robust and vigorous as the forest trees that surrounded the paternal dwelling. A farmer's child, his boyhood was quite like that of most other boys, had not the dogs of war been let loose at his own door, he might still be following the plough; roaming over the Boston Mountains; a keen huntsman; a dead shot.

In politics, his father was a Democrat of the Jeffersonian school. Young Willhite early imbibed kindred views of public affairs. In the campaign of 1860, both father and son were warmly interested as Union men, nor were they at all timorous in the avowal of their sentiments. The all-absorbing topic of the time was the question of negro slavery in some form or other. The utterance of views antagonistic to its extension, or even in opposition to the secession of the slaveholding States, was met first by contumely, then with hate and persecution. As between immediate and unconditional secession, and co-operation with the other Border States, a phase which the troubles of the time assumed, the Willhites favored the latter. They were notwithstanding, unconditional Union men, and when in February, 1861, the people were called upon to send delegates to a State Convention to consider the grave question of separation, they worked zealously for Union nominees.

One of the candidates was Thomas M. Gunter a lawyer of position, residing in Fayetteville. Opposed to him was Wilburn D. Reagan, another Fayetteville attorney, a bitter, uncompromising secessionist. At a public meeting held at the place just mentioned, during the canvass conducted on the Southern plan, Gunter was

called out, after a rabid speech by Reagan made beneath a secession banner. He responded to the call, but declined speaking under the "damnable rag," pointing to it. An adjournment took place to the Court house. In the crowd that followed him were Willhite and a score of well-armed men, who were determined that he should speak without molestation, as now some symptoms of trouble were breaking out. Gunter began. To repeat the humble saying of the time, he told the boys to "stick up" for him as he would for the Union, and he would suffer his right arm to be taken from his body sooner than cast a secession vote. This "Gunter's scale," however, proved to be of the sliding order. He sat in the Convention, cast his vote for the fatal measure that went like a knell to the prosperity of the State. Returning home he had the ignoble privilege of meeting those whom he had betrayed. The delegates from Washington County to this Convention seemed, before their election, happily to unite in denunciation of the suicidal doctrine of secession. The pure air of the White River hills apparently stimulated the noble spirit of self-sacrifice. The determination to suffer their bodies to be maimed, at least on the part of David Walker and Thomas M. Gunter, rather than aid in taking the State out of the Union, was especially commendable. But the cotton lands of the valley of the Arkansas neutralized White River; Little Rock overawed Fayetteville, and the outstretched arms that had so patriotically been offered as a holocaust upon the altar of the Union, still obeyed original will, bodies and members committing treason together. After the secession of the State, Gunter returned to Fayetteville and accepted a captaincy in the Third Regiment of Arkansas State Troops. His defection was now complete, and whatever claims he may have had to the suffrages of Washington County, his treason had obliterated every

sense of obligation. He stood condemned by his friends of a lifetime.

Whether on duty or otherwise, it so happened that he was in Fayetteville, when in July, 1862, Major Hubbard, of the first Missouri Cavalry, and Major Miller, of the Second Wisconsin, dashed into the town, with a very considerable scouting party, creating some consternation and more "skedaddling." Though the occurrence took place early in the morning, Gunter was on the street, and discovering the approaching cavalry, hastily made a dissolving view of himself. When danger is imminent and one is flying from it, speed is everything. The ex-delegate was very soon snugly stowed away in the attic of the house of a rebel friend, one Isaac Taylor. Why he did not seek his own home history does not inform us; quite possibly it was inconvenient for him to do so. Then again he might be caught in transit, and hurried off to Springfield under circumstances that would compel him to leave his command behind, a conjectural condition of things more probable than pleasant. All day long the obscure but friendly attic concealed its strange inhabitant. The lower story was frequently searched for the occupant of the house, but the persistent Federals at length became satisfied that he was not at home. They little thought of the specimen of half suspended animation so short a distance above them and for whom they had elsewhere looked in vain. Towards night "an intelligent contraband" disclosed his whereabouts, and he was dragged to the light, though he "loved darkness rather." Taken to Springfield he was there exchanged, and is now a colonel in the rebel army. Such was one of the prominent leaders of the Union party in Northwestern Arkansas, but thanks to the sturdy common sense of the masses, his defection did not carry with it the majority of those who had determined,

through weal or woe to stand by the old flag. They have, however, cause enough to curse the day they voted for Thomas M. Gunter. The ruined farms and the desolate households of a once prosperous and happy community, will, for long years, couple his name with those of David Walker and John Parks, a triumvirate of treachery. But we are digressing. Gunter was permitted to continue his speech, and the meeting adjourning, the people separated to their homes congratulating themselves upon the firmness and devotion of one of their principal leaders.

Shortly after this occurrence and before the secession of the State, Willhite attached himself to a company of minute men, who were to be ready at a moment's warning to respond to the call of public danger. The most of the company were at heart Union men. They secretly resolved to make their organization subservient to their own wishes. While matters were in this situation, one James M. Scott raised a secession flag in Cove Creek Township, and called on the minute men to rally beneath it. The minutes just then became hours, and Willhite and his companions made haste to rally very slowly. In fact they flatly refuse to do so, and Mr. Scott's banner hung lazily from the staff, looking for all the world as though it had been brought out to droop and die. Willhite had now thoroughly committed himself to the Union cause, and it behooved him to look well to his personal safety. The rebel element predominated in his neighborhood, and the "strikers" and "tools" of the secession leaders, were implacable in their resentments. Not considering, however, that his immediate personal peril was so great as to warrant an abrupt departure from the State, and yet feeling that he must never go about unarmed, Willhite remained at home and prepared to "make a crop." When following the plow a trusty rifle was invariably slung from his back, and a

brace of revolvers were belted about him. At night, the rifle stood at the head of the bed, and he often slept with his revolvers on. Several times when in the field he descried me coming to take him prisoner. He would then leave the plow in the furrow, slip into the woods and remain there until his enemies went away. There was no danger of their interfering with the horses or plow. They knew too well the deadliness of his aim, and the disagreeable doubt as to who would be his victim, kept them all away from the peril.

One day in June six rebels, whom for the satisfaction of their friends, we will name, Gilhamton Walker, Calvin Walker, George Bell, Alfred Strickler, John King and William Sharp, knowing that he was at home rode hastily up to take him, but he was too quick for them, and dodging around a corner of the house, with his rifle and revolvers, held his advantage while a parley took place. They informed him that they had come to arrest him because he was a Union man. He informed them they would have to reinforce and come again, that six men were not enough for the business, and that if any of them "dropped a gun," one man would fall sure, and they would not know beforehand who it was to be. Like their predecessors who scouted the corn-field, they returned as wise as they came, even requesting that they might ride away unharmed.

Not long afterwards another squad rode up to the house for a similar purpose. Fortunately Willhite was absent, but to his mother was considerably shown the rope with which they intended to hang him. Going during the same summer to Kidd's mill, near Cane Hill, for flour for the family, a knot of men gathered around and "allowed" to take him prisoner. On the other hand, he "allowed" that if they made any such attempt, he should defend himself to the last; that he had thirteen shots,

and should try his best to make some of them "tell," and that they could not take him alive. His determination subdued the crowd somewhat, and T. K. Kidd, a merchant of the place, interceding in his behalf, on the ground that he might yet make a good southern soldier, he was permitted to transact his business at the mill and return home.

There was living at this time not far away from Willhite, a Baptist minister, known by many as "Old Tommy Dodson, the preacher," otherwise rejoicing in the christened name of Thomas. He was a violent secessionist, and preached whenever audiences could be assembled, whether on the Sabbath or during the week; nor did he confine himself to Biblical teaching. The sword of the spirit was not, in his judgment, the only weapon to be wielded for the Confederacy. His tirades were frequent and unsparing against Union men and Black Republicans, who, if they did not recant, were to be driven off or shot. On one occasion Willhite attended his services, held at the house of Benjamin Strickler, on Fall Creek. The congregation was quite large for the locality, and in it were several soldiers belonging to the regular rebel army. The preacher's harangue savored, as usual, of public affairs. The secession of the State was justified; the public functionaries at Richmond lauded; a highly wrought prophecy of the grandeur of the New Republic was pronounced, and then fell the ministerial denunciation on all those who still clung to the old government. Warming with his subject and evidently growing indignant, he exclaimed—"If there is a Union man within the sound of my voice, I want him to leave the house, and leave it now."

Thinking it about time to depart, and having no reluctance to define his position, Willhite started for the door.

"Then, go," resumed the excited and now somewhat exhausted preacher, moving towards the retreating Federal, "and darken not again the house of God. And do you, my brave boys," pointing to the rebel soldiers, "fight on for the glorious Southern Confederacy. The Lord is on our side. The Lord will help us to gain the independence of the South." By this time Willhite was in the yard, and the Rev. Thomas Dodson began slowly to return to his normal condition. Eighteen months later, the same clerical gentleman was an inmate of the guard-house at Fayetteville, under charges for trial before a military commission, to sit at Springfield, and Willhite was officer of the guard. Alas! The mutations of sublunary affairs.

The summer and autumn passed without any special peril to Willhite, other than what we have referred to, except that the necessity for vigilance was greater, so much, in fact, that in November he was compelled to "lay out." Anticipating a winter of trouble, unless he were to take unusual precautions against it, he had, by night, hauled one hundred bushels of corn and some other forage to a secluded spot on the Boston Mountains, intending to pass the winter in a cave and subsist a few horses. In this manner he lived, occasionally going home clandestinely, until the month of May, 1862, when he secretly made his way to Springfield, Missouri, with William Zinnamon, who, for a time, had been his companion in the cave.

Colonel M. La Rue Harrison was then organizing the Arkansian refugees into what subsequently became the First Regiment of Arkansas Cavalry Volunteers. Willhite at once identified himself with the project. Being empowered not long afterwards as a recruiting officer for the regiment, he left Springfield on the 5th of July with Dr. Wm. Hunter, of Washington County, and

Thomas J. Gilstrap, of Crawford County., afterwards respectively assistant surgeon and a lieutenant in the same regiment. Falling in with the expedition commanded by Major Miller, they proceeded to Fayetteville, whence they moved on to the head of the White River.

Recruiting in Arkansas for the Union Army was at that time a perilous undertaking. Loyal men avowed their principles at the hazard of life. The greatest difficulty to be overcome was in getting recruits to the rendezvous of the regiment for which enlistments were being made. The Provost Marshal's department of Arkansas, as organized by Major General Hindman, then commanding the trans-Mississippi district, was in active operation. Numerous companies of provost guards had been formed, and under color of orders, were robbing Union men and committing all manner of outrages. They were especially zealous in their efforts to check the growing tendency to enlist in the "Abolition Army," as they termed it, and hunted with the eagerness of a bloodhound those Union men who, first cautious, and then expeditious, abandoned their homes for the woods, and woods for the Federal pickets. The general order that thus gave license to rapine, and stimulated the blind zeal of a prejudiced people, ran as follows, not omitting the italicized phrases as they appeared in the original publication:

"General Orders No. 17

"Head Quarters, Trans-Mississippi District,

"Little Rock, Ark, June 17, 1862.

" I. For the more effectual annoyance of the enemy upon our rivers and in our mountains and woods, all citizens of this district, who are not subject to conscription, are called upon to organize themselves into

independent companies of mounted men or infantry, as they prefer, arming and equipping themselves, and to serve in that part of the district to which they belong.

"II. When as many as ten men come together for this purpose, they may organize by electing a captain, one sergeant and one corporal, and will at once commence operations against the enemy, without waiting for special instructions. Their duty will be to cut off Federal picket, scouts, foraging parties, and trains, and to kill pilots and others on gun-boats and transports, attacking them day and night, and using the greatest vigor in their movements. As soon as the company attains the strength required by law, it will proceed to elect the other officers to which it is entitled. All such organizations will be reported to these head-quarters as soon as practicable. They will receive pay and allowances for subsistence and forage, for the time actually in the field, as established by the affidavits of their captains.

"III. These companies will be governed in all respects by the same regulations as other troops.

"Captains will be held responsible for the good conduct and efficiency of their men, and will report to these head-quarters from time to time.

"By Command of Major-General Hindman:
"R. C. Newton, A. A. Gen'l."

By arrangement, Willhite and Gilstrap, having for recruiting purposes gone into different neighborhoods, were to meet at the house of one Spencer Bullard, on Fall Creek, in Washington County, and there concert measures for the removal, or getting northward rather, of their recruits. For some reason or other, Gilstrap had

departed on Willhite's arrival, and the latter having with him twenty-eight men, determined to retire into the White River Hills and the Boston Mountains, and collecting from the adjoining settlements still other men who were anxious to get away, bide his time for departure. At first he went to Winn's Creek, at the head of the west fork of White River. His re-appearance in a country where he was so well known, and his object thoroughly understood, caused great watchfulness on the part of the secession element. One Doctor H. Spencer in particular, now a citizen prisoner, at Springfield, Missouri, under the general charge of robbing Union men, was very active in his endeavors to find out how many recruits Willhite had. An old vindictive man, with a countenance that would have betrayed him in a church, we well remember his appearance when brought before us for examination. He hunted Willhite and others as the woodman seeks his game, and we made short work of preliminaries. Spencer, a home guard himself, and co-operating with the bands now organized and organizing under the general order that we have inserted, placed every impediment possible in the way of the daring recruiting officer.

There were now in Crawford and Washington Counties, carrying out the spirit, if not the letter, of the order, no less than six companies led by Frank Oliver, Peter Mankins, and four other notorious marauders, all of whom were on the track of Willhite. He still, however, succeeded in avoiding capture. His rendezvous was the wilds of the Boston Mountains; his subsistence the irregular hospitality of secretly Union men, and his comrades now together and now apart, increased their numbers and their resolution alike by daring and danger. His camp of instruction was a thicket or a hill, and his times for drill the opportune moments when provost guards

came within range, and his trusty weapons made targets of traitors.

Lying in the woods on day in August, near the house of William Strickler, in Mountain Township, Washington County, with six men, a blood hound was heard baying in the distance, and apparently on his track. Like a general in the field, Willhite immediately made his "dispositions," each man taking a tree and re-examining his weapons. Their horses were tied in a thicket a short distance off, and they now awaited the approach. Presently a number of men were observed advancing; the hound had been called in and they moved very cautiously, dismounting when they observed Willhite, and creeping warily towards him. Discovering three men evidently endeavoring to get a safe shot at him, he anticipated their design by commencing hostilities with both barrels of his shot gun. Wounding two, the third placed a tree between himself and danger, and afterwards still further increased his chances for life by slipping away entirely.

This attack, more sudden and effective than they had anticipated, cooled the ardor of the home guards, and though a number of guns were fired, which but for the friendly protection of the forest would have been deadly in their effect, they fell back, remounted their horses and rode off. Willhite now assumed the offensive, and approaching the highway by a devious but rapid and effective movement, came suddenly upon his foes of the hour before. Singling out Woodruff (the leader of the party,) as the object of his personal aim, he missed the man, but killed his horse. Several others, however, were wounded, but succeeded in escaping. This little affair roused the leaders again, and vigilance was redoubled. Rallying under Sutton F. Cotterill, of Van Buren, the provost marshal of Crawford County, two hundred

camped one evening at the three forks of Lee's Creek, in the county last mentioned. From a high bluff adjacent to, and overlooking their camp, Willhite had watched them for several hours, and when night set in, knowing that he could not attack, for he had but two men, he nevertheless determined to acquaint them with his proximity. Hallooing with all his might, he informed whom it might concern, that if they wanted him they must catch him, as it would be unpleasant just then to surrender.

How or why we are unable to say, but early on the following morning the guards decamped. Possibly they feared an attack; and then again, should they assume the offensive, the disagreeable uncertainty of the bushes was too fresh in memory to be rashly courted. Willhite lingered long enough to see his enemies disappear, when he dashed again into the woods. A short time after this occurrence his father was arrested while moving along the highway near the west fork of White River. There was with him a small boy, who, not being interfered with, hastened as expeditiously as he dared to the hiding place, not far away, of two of Willhite's men. They were there, fortunately, and knowing where Willhite then was, lost no time in acquainting him with his father's arrest. Hurriedly collecting four of his men, he started down the Van Buren road, and after a sharp run of nine miles, overtook his father, then guarded by seven men. Four of the guards "broke" for the woods, and the remaining three were taken, dismounted, relieved of their arms and then set at liberty.

About this time a warrant for the arrest and execution of Willhite was procured from the rebel military authorities by Frank Oliver, a heretofore mentioned leader of home guards. It proving somewhat difficult to proceed under this warrant, according to its exigency, General Hindman offered a reward of seven thousand

dollars and three honorable discharges from the Confederate service to any man who would bring in Willhite, living or dead. Notices to this effect were posted along Cove, Fall, and Lee's Creeks, and the west fork of White River. Scouting about one day in September, with a number of his men, and having occasion to cross Lee's Creek, near the base of the southern slope of the Boston Mountains, Willhite discovered one of these notices tacked to a tree. Claiming the right to "cross-notice", he appropriated the margin to his own use, by inscribing thereon a notification to this effect; that his men and himself claimed forty square miles of the Boston Mountains, and that if Hindman and his provost guards trespassed upon their dominions, they would seek to drive them into the valley below, and there assume the offensive. He now takes from his pocket the jack of diamonds, nails it to the tree, and writing above the head of this well-known gentleman the significant word "Union", informed "Squire" Hindman that if he wants him he must first catch him, and to be careful at the same time that he does not "catch a Tartar." The party now rode off.

A few days later, when Willhite was lying in the woods near the summit of the Boston Mountains, word came to him that General Hindman himself had just eaten dinner at a house not far distant, and that he was then on the road to Fayetteville, moving in a carriage with a body guard of but six men. Hastily gathering a few of his companions Willhite took up the pursuit. Bearing still further from the highway than he then was, he thought to strike it again in advance of the general, but in this he failed. In the distance, however, he descried the coveted carriage, and hastened forward with all speed. The pursued now took alarm and hurried away northward. The chase was becoming exciting,

but unfortunately for the pursuers they were nearing the rebel pickets at Hog Eye, twelve miles south of Fayetteville. Conscious that they had no time to lose, Willhite and two of his men took as steady aim as circumstances would admit, and away whizzed a ball after the carriage, a second and then a third. But General Hindman was still safe, though the pursuit did not cease until the pickets, his body guard and the carriage went pell-mell into the poetically named village so conveniently at hand. The pursuers now wheeled about and hied away to their fastnesses.

Leading thus a life of wild adventure, Willhite passed his time on, and in the vicinity of the Boston Mountains, until the advance into Arkansas of the Army of the Frontier in October, 1862. His escapes from peril were manifold. His superior knowledge, however, of the woods, and his consciousness of the fact that nature would permit only a few men to operate against him at a time, gave him confidence and strength, and did not bid adieu, until of his own volition he reported with a small squad of men to General Herron at Cross Hollows, twenty-eight miles south of the Missouri line. As early as August, it had been found impracticable to take a number of recruits northward in a body, Willhite had accordingly determined to remain in the mountains, annoying the enemy and taking vengeance upon those who had so cruelly robbed and maltreated Union men, until his passage could be safely and easily made.

From Cross Hollows Willhite proceeded to Elkhorn Tavern, where he rejoined his company, and was at once appointed its first lieutenant, a position that had been left vacant for months in the hope that he would yet arrive to fill it. From that time onward Willhite has been constantly engaged in active service, always entering with zest upon the adventures for which there is so much

incentive on the Border.

On one occasion while scouting below Fayetteville, and not far from his haunts of the summer previous, he drove in Marmaduke's pickets, and then suddenly wheeling, was off again to the northward. He participated in the nocturnal skirmish elsewhere mentioned, and while out made a descent into a cave, under circumstances worthy perhaps of a relation. The cave in question was located about six miles southeast of Black's Mills, in Benton on the afternoon preceding the skirmish, the detachment was conducted. Arriving at its mouth, and observing traces of the recent entrance of some one, the men were disposed semi-circularly around it and the unknown individual told to come out. No response, the order was repeated. Still no answer. Willhite now volunteered to crawl in. Buckling a brace of revolvers firmly about him, and grasping a third in his right hand, he commenced operations. Advancing on all fours, and moving about seventy-five yards into the cave, situated on a hill side he discovered a man crouching in apparently great fear. Breaking the silence by ordering him out, the figure began to move and he to follow. As the unknown individual approached the light, the men brought their pieces to the shoulder and awaited his appearance. Presently emerged a head, then shoulders, arms and hands. At sight of the men and their weapons, the unknown stopped while yet midway between the upper and nether earth, rested himself firmly on his hands, and looking queerly up and around him, exclaimed, "Well! this beats me!" He was beaten surely enough, but found his captors inclined to treat him kindly. Taken to Elkhorn he was afterwards released, but cautioned to refrain in the future from running when he saw Federals. We know the man, and thus far the advice has been heeded. We now leave the subject of this sketch.

Rebels call him a desperado, but he fought only and is now fighting, for "The Union, the Constitution, and the Laws."

Fayetteville, Arkansas
February 1863

A. W. Bishop
Lieutenant Colonel First Cavalry Volunteers

This article came from the same book as above.
Rebellion on the Border

On the 18th of October, Captain Galloway was ordered to Elk Horn Tavern. While the battalion to which he was attached remained there, he was almost constantly engaged in the perilous duty of scouting. Around the 1st of December he was sent out with about one hundred men, with Lieutenant Thomas Willhite who was thoroughly acquainted with the country, as second in command, to endeavor to break up a notorious company of marauders, known as Enyart's band. Falling in with them on the main fork of White River, fifteen miles southeast of Fayetteville, a spirited skirmish ensued, in which Stephen Enyart, the Captain of the band, and one others were killed, and a few wounded. The rest precipitately fled towards the Boston Mountains. To repulse the marauders of the Southwest they must be met in their own way, and no men were better qualified for these hazardous operations than Galloway and Willhite.

Sometimes it is easier to follow the Band
Than it is to face the Music.

First UofA Buildings

Where did they begin?

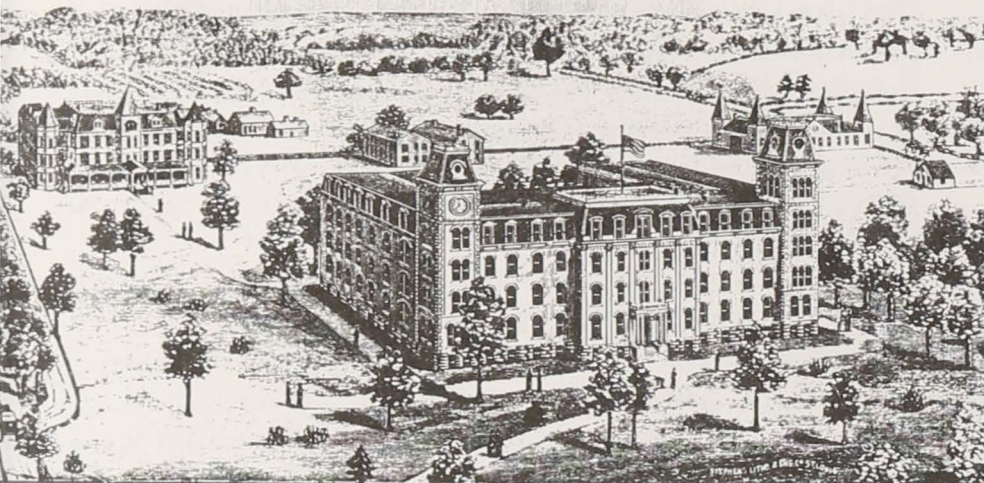
by Don E. Schaefer

Much has been taken for granted about the location of the original frame buildings at Arkansas Industrial University (now the University of Arkansas). The two old frame structures were located for a quarter of a century on a hill west of Old Main. It has been assumed by many people that this is where the University had its humble beginnings. Leflar's history of the University has put these two frame buildings and the McIlroy farmhouse in this same westerly location. An 1888 lithograph of the campus (see page 33) shows the same configuration of the early frame structures.

A little digging has turned up the original locations of these buildings—not archeological digging, but a little digging through old maps, photographs, and the minutes of the Board of Trustees.

First New Buildings Finished in 1872

When the University's Board of Trustees, on November 15, 1871, selected the McIlroy farm in Fayetteville as the site of Arkansas' new land-grant university, they knew that they had a congressional deadline of February 12 for starting classes. So they scheduled Monday, January 22, 1872, as the first day of classes and there was a rush to get adequate facilities ready. The board's building committee had the farm's dwelling house remodeled and a new 24 x 40 foot, two-story frame building constructed so that classes started on time. In fact, classes started on January 22, three weeks ahead of the congressional deadline. The new building cost \$975.00.



This lithograph appeared in early editions of the University catalogue beginning in 1888. The original frame building appears above the south tower of Old Main, and is incorrectly depicted to be two equal sized buildings. It was actually two structures that had been linked together at the rear of the right-hand, smaller building of the two. Also, this combination building was canted clockwise about five degrees from true north, and was not “square” with anything else on campus. The other small buildings further to the west were on the University’s farm. (*Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville*)

By June approximately 100 students had filled these facilities to capacity. The board elected to construct a second larger two-story frame building—this one 36 x 50 feet. This additional building was finished during the summer for \$2,219.00 and was ready for classes during the fall term of 1872.

These two buildings served the complete needs of the new state University until a permanent structure (Old Main) was finished in 1875.

From the fall of 1871 until the fall of 1873 the Board

of Trustees, and particularly the Building Committee, were concentrating most of their efforts on planning and beginning the construction of a permanent building for the University. At an April 16, 1873, meeting the Board decided to model the University's new building after one that had just been completed for Illinois Industrial University (later the University of Illinois) at Urbana. On July 4, bids were opened, and the contract to construct the new building was awarded to Mayes & Oliver for \$123,855.

Location of Temporary Buildings

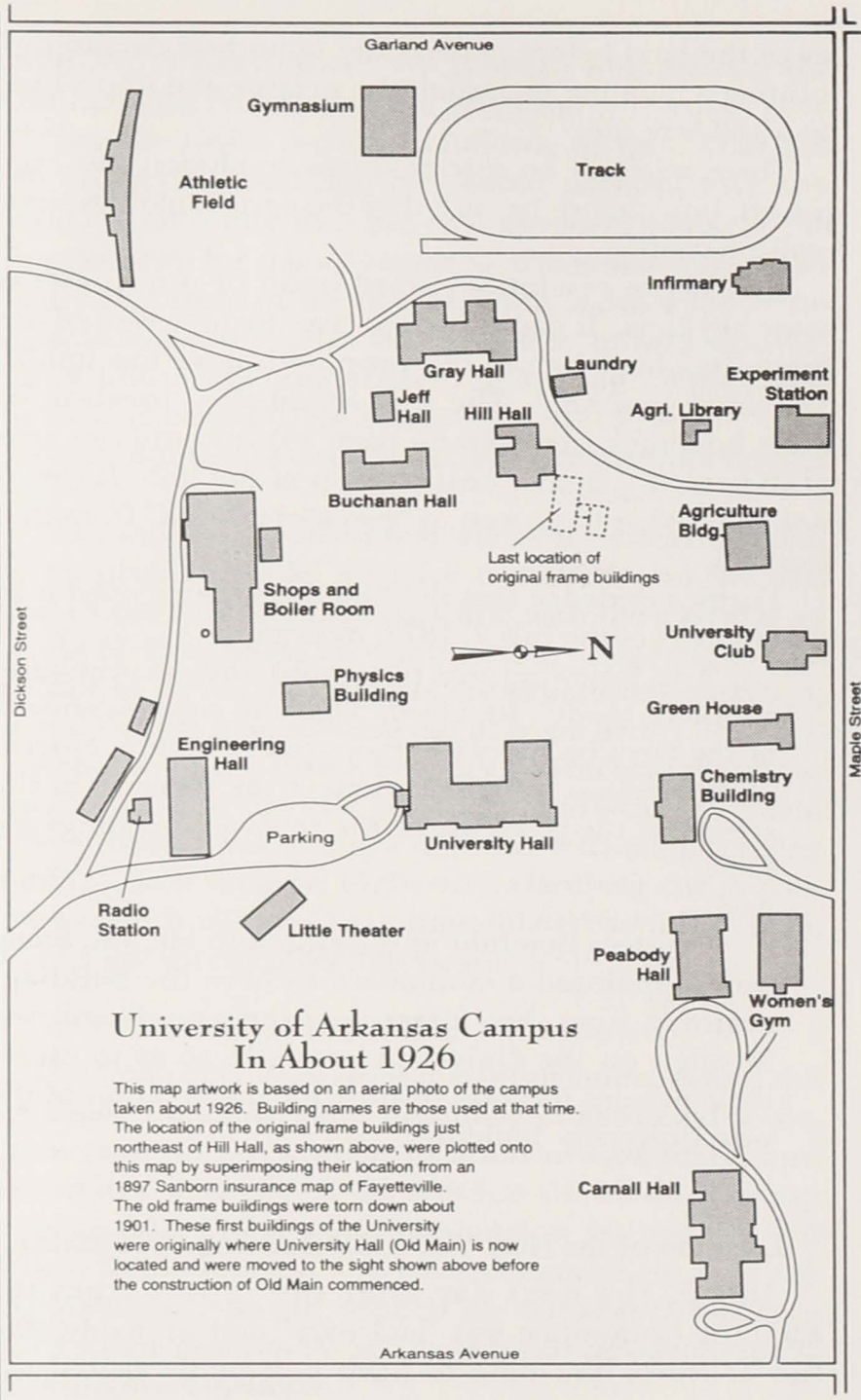
At this point, before the construction on the permanent building for the new University was started, where were the farmhouse and the temporary buildings located?

Board minutes from the July 4, 1873, meeting in Fayetteville give the first clue for the original location of the temporary buildings. In a report from the Building Committee to President of the Board J. C. Corbin, this resolution was "laid over till to-morrow morning:"

"Mr. President: Your Building Committee have (sic) visited the University grounds for the purpose of selecting a site upon which to locate the University building, and we would recommend that the buildings now used by the University be moved to the elevated ground to the west of their present position, and that the new building be put up at or near where the buildings now stand.

JOHN M. CLAYTON,
Chairman Building Committee"

There is no record that this resolution was brought up the next day, or acted upon at any subsequent meeting. Undoubtedly, the entire Board wanted to see the



University of Arkansas Campus In About 1926

This map artwork is based on an aerial photo of the campus taken about 1926. Building names are those used at that time. The location of the original frame buildings just northeast of Hill Hall, as shown above, were plotted onto this map by superimposing their location from an 1897 Sanborn insurance map of Fayetteville. The old frame buildings were torn down about 1901. These first buildings of the University were originally where University Hall (Old Main) is now located and were moved to the sight shown above before the construction of Old Main commenced.

lay of the land before making the important decision of locating a building that would be so large and impressive on a 160-acre site.

Since we can't be sure that this resolution was ever passed, how can we be sure that the early buildings were really moved?

The above resolution, acted upon or not, presents some key facts. It makes it clear that the area west of the frame buildings before the proposed move was uphill, "elevated ground." The well-established location of these buildings (see map on page 35) up until the turn of the century, is very near the top of the hill. It would not be possible to go west to "elevated ground" from that location.

Further evidence that the buildings were moved is in the minutes of the July 7, 1873, meeting:

"The following was presented and unanimously adopted, to-wit: Resolved, That the superintendent of the farm be hereby empowered to build a cistern, of dimensions sufficient to meet the demand of the school, at the place where the removed buildings are to be."

And:

"Trustees Botefuhr and Naylor and Mr. S.K. Stone were appointed a committee to have the buildings removed from their present to their newly-assigned location on the University grounds, so as to vacate their present location in time for the erection of the new University building."

Location of the New University Building (Old Main)

July 5, the next day after the report from the Building Committee was "laid over" and probably after the Trustees had time to have personally visited the

University property, these two motions were among the business items recorded in the minutes:

"Trustee Cohn moved as follows, to wit: 'That the new University building be placed parallel with the meridian, on a line with the new two-story frame buildings used now for school rooms on the ground; that is to say the East front of the new building about to be erected to be on a line with the East side of said double-school house building above alluded to.' Which said motion was passed by the following vote . . . "

Later during the same meeting, another motion was recorded:

"The motion prevailed that the new University building be placed parallel with the meridian, and the east front of the new building on a line with the east end of the old McIlroy house as it now stands, or as near to said east line as, in the judgment of the supervising architect, the walls of the new building ought to be laid."

Apparently, the Board was very concerned about the exact location of the new building. The second motion above probably was adding a little more detail to the first motion. Both motions likely were clarifying the resolution by the Building Committee made the day before, the one not specifically acted upon.

The Original Buildings Were Moved

The first conclusion from this information is that the two frame buildings were originally constructed somewhere close to the present location of Old Main, and then moved westward to the location shown on the map on page 35. The second conclusion is that the old McIlroy farmhouse was also located somewhere near the Old Main site. So far, records do not show what happened to the farmhouse, and we are not certain about its exact original location.

What Became of the Old Frame Buildings?

Sometime after the frame buildings were moved to their new location, if not at the time of their moving, the larger of the two buildings was lengthened from 50 feet to 80 feet and the two buildings were joined by a two-story section about 18 x 18 feet. The connecting section was flush with the west side of the smaller building, and the east ends of the two buildings were lined up. This



In the Reynolds and Thomas history of the University where this picture first appeared, it is titled, "Original Building University of Arkansas, 1872," which could give the impression that this picture was made in 1872. Careful examination of the photograph reveals a portion of the Agricultural Experiment Station Building in the background which would make the date of the picture much later. These two buildings were constructed near the location of Old Main and moved to the location in the photo in 1873. They were joined together at the rear of the smaller building and the larger building was lengthened by 30 feet. The place where the addition started can be seen at the left in the photograph. (*John Hugh Reynolds Papers (MS R33) Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville*)

configuration was taken from an 1897 Sanborn insurance map of Fayetteville and overlaid onto a map drawn from an aerial photograph that showed some of the same buildings as the Sanborn map. It was also confirmed through careful examination of photographs of the buildings.

After the buildings were joined, the combined structure has since been referred to as a building (singular). The earliest photograph of the building(s) which appeared in the Reynolds and Thomas history of the University looks like two buildings, but it is labeled "Original Building University of Arkansas, 1872." (See photo on page 38.). Some readers might get the impression that this was an 1872 photograph, but it is evident that the picture was made much later than that, perhaps in the 1890s.

The old buildings ceased to be used as classrooms when Old Main was completed in 1875, and the combined structure was used mostly as a dorm after that time. The 1897 Sanborn map had it labeled "Mess Hall & Dormitory." A previous Sanborn map called it a "Refectory," which means about the same thing. Several University catalogs called it "Steward's Hall." After Buchanan Hall was built in 1887, it was called the New Dormitory and the frame buildings referred to as the Old Dormitory. The "new" dormitory was called Buchanan Hall in the 1898-99 catalog and the old buildings were never mentioned again in the catalogs. (Buchanan Hall was torn down in about 1936.)

The old frame building was still standing in 1899 as evidenced from this item in an 1899 issue of *The Ozark*, a campus publication:

"Some of the many needed improvements have been made. One addition was built to the laboratory, and one wing of the old 'dorm' was torn away, and

the other repaired. Things are gradually assuming a more respectable appearance, but there is yet much that could be done."

In 1901 construction was started on another "new" dormitory which would later be named Hill Hall. It appears that the old frame building, or what was left of it, was located very close to or overlapping onto the Hill Hall site. This is probably when the old frame structure in which the University began was torn down.

So the "temporary" buildings lasted nearly 30 years.

These newly found facts will add still more to the importance of Old Main to the beginnings of the University of Arkansas. Old Main is located on the site of the first buildings where the University had its beginning classes in 1872.

Don Schaefer is a resident of Fayetteville and a retired staff member of the University of Arkansas. He has a special interest in these original frame buildings because his grandfather, W.E. Whitford, lived in one of them while a student here from 1886-89.

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PHONE 499

The Questorians

By Mary Jo and Gene Godfrey

In 1993 The Washington County Historical Society sponsored the organization of a discussion group whose purpose was to provide a forum where people interested in genealogy could get together and exchange ideas and information. Lois Miller, Barbara Hale, and Mary Jo Godfrey, members of the WCHS Board of Directors, organized the first meeting in January, 1993.

This group was named "The Questorians", a name devised by Barbara Hale to suggest the quest for family history.

A basic principle of the Questorians is that ANYONE is welcome: there are no membership requirements. The meetings are an excellent way for anyone with no knowledge of genealogy to find out what the field is like in a friendly atmosphere. Meetings are held at Hillcrest Towers in Fayetteville on the third Sunday of each month except December from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. It is noteworthy that attendance at the meetings has included some 140 newcomers- some of whom are now regulars who never miss a meeting. Regulars are encouraged to become members of WCHS.

Most meetings feature a speaker with expertise in some aspect of genealogy/family history. Some speakers who have appeared include: a publisher, a computer specialist, an author, an archivist, a Civil War historian, an Indian specialist, and a curator.

At the end of 1993 it was decided to formalize the Questorians in order to better manage its affairs. Accordingly, a nominating committee chose candidates for the offices of President, Vice President, and

Secretary/Treasurer. These candidates, members of the WCHS, were duly elected. Their function was to plan programs, provide refreshments, generate publicity, record the transactions of the group, and manage finances. The same officers were reelected for 1994. The current officers are: President, Henrietta Holcomb; Vice President, Juanita Tudor DeFord; Secretary/Treasurer, Mary King.

Following is a list of 1994 programs:

- January** Indian Genealogy—Dorothy Mauldin.
(cancelled because of bad weather.)
- February** “Dead Ends” round table discussion.
- March** History and Genealogy—Gordon McNeill
- April** Indian Genealogy Research Workshop—
Dorothy Mauldin.
The only event which required a fee. It was a six hour workshop, including lunch and was held on a Saturday. 33 people attended.
- May** Family Correspondence in Genealogical Research—Ethel Simpson.
- June** Orphan Train Riders and Adoptees—
Mary Ellen Johnson.
- July** Extended Use of Census Records—
Barbara Hale.
- August** Use of DAR and SAR Records—Bob Prichard.

September . . . Guide to Sources for Genealogy Research—Mary King.

October "I remember", preserving your life's stories—Virginia Jackson.

November . . . Using Church Records for Genealogical Research—Lloyd Warren.

The Questorians are continuing to solicit pedigrees and family group sheets from anyone who would like to add to the collection of the WCHS. About 50 pedigrees were collected last year. There are now several hundred of these records on file at WCHS Headquarters House and they are available for the use of genealogical researchers.

Meetings are now being planned for 1995. Suggestions for topics are welcome. If there is some aspect of genealogy or family history that you would like to hear discussed, feel free to suggest it to any of the officers.



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Bells Exemplified Devotion to Students, Each Other

To the Editor:

If you think there are no real role models these days, you evidently haven't met Bunn and Louise Shores Bell. Their lives have been so involved with so many children and young people over the years, that the examples of their love and dedication has been an inspiration to those of us who have had the privilege of either being a student or a friend, or both. Bunn became a tireless mentor to Scouting, a civic leader, a church elder, a pioneer at the University of Arkansas as first director of the Student Union, and always an energetic partner to Louise, as she played her dual role as teacher and principal at Fayetteville High School. She disciplined all of us, in the very best sense of the word and respect that we feel for both the Bells is a testimony to their wise and kind advice and counsel. We all went our separate ways to lives enriched by these two very special people.

They never failed to welcome "their kids" into the wonderful historic home near the Prairie Grove battlefield, filled with fine antique pieces, acquired lovingly over the years. We delighted in recalling sentimental stories and mischievous anecdotes, well remembered from the days of high school. Louise, with Bunn's assistance, put us all to shame when it came to details and dates. Sharing stories with them was like reliving a time in our lives that comes but once, and is gone all too soon. Their wonderful smiles and hugs were just like a security blanket, as we left that tranquil lawn with the magnificent old trees. Their confidence in us continues to give us the courage to face life's challenges determined to



Bunn and Louise Bell

make Bunn and Louise proud of us, and pass that kind of legacy on to our children and grandchildren. Bunn, with his quick wit and "little boy" charm, will be sorely missed in this community and everywhere his influence has been felt, by those he led so ably and whom he befriended along the way. His loving partnership with his devoted wife, spanning 67 years, should be a wonderful example to all of us that the institution of marriage is truly one worth cherishing. As we remember Bunn Bell, and what he meant to the lives of so many, our hearts are with Louise, who has always taught us to stand straight and tall like the trees she loves so much. How lucky we are to be their friends.

Billie J. Starr
Fayetteville AR

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DO YOU KNOW who these men in the card game are? This is one of many pictures in the Historical Society's files that needs identifying. If you have answers or clues about this photo, please contact the Society.

Memorial Donations

These memorial donations to the Washington County
Historical Society have been recently received.

In the name of

Mamie Rieff

by D. E. Rieff

In the name of

Amos Adams

by Clem A. Ellington

In the name of

Amos Adams

by Jean and Keith Newhouse

In the name of

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In the name of

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by Lewis and Mary John Jones

In the name of

Bunn Bell

by Betty Lighton

In the name of

Bunn Bell

by David and Carolyn Newbern

In the name of

Bunn Bell

by George R. Holcomb

In the name of

Bunn Bell

by Keith and Jean Newhouse



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